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THE STATE OF READING.

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NATIONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE STATE OF READING EXISTS TODAY BECAUSE MANY CITIZENS ARE UNABLE TO READ ADEQUATELY. THE TREND TOWARD A REASONED RESPONSE TO THE READING CRISIS IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS -- (1) THE TEACHER'S SKILL IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MATERIALS HE USES, (2) NO ONE METHOD OR SET OF MATERIALS ADQUATELY SUITS ALL STUDENTS, AND (3) RESEARCH FINDINGS NEED TO BE TRANSLATED INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE. EVIDENCE OF THESE FACTORS FOUND IN RESEARCH STUDIES AND PROGRAMS IS EXAMINED. SUGGESTIONS ARE MADE TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO HELP TEACHERS IMPROVE INSTRUCTION. REFERENCES ARE PROVIDED. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH CONFERENCE (HONOLULU, NOVEMBER 23-25, 1967). (BK)

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THE STATE OF READING

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Discussing "The State of Reading" implies an omniscience that I don't claim to have. I observe reading programs and practices in my travels, but do not travel widely enough to sample accurately the national scene. Consequently, I resort to reading about programs and practices, and I interpret trends. Obviously my own biases influence what I perceive as trends and, in the case of this paper, what I perceive to be the "State of Reading."

Consequently, I will be presenting what we might call an "objective" appraisal of the State of Reading from Herber's point of view! I would urge you to be alert to detect bias and compare it with your own. At the end of my presentation I will be asking you to participate in a cooperative effort to draw conclusions from what I have had to say. You will need to recall many of the specific points that I make throughout the paper in order to participate in this final activity.

To discuss the State of Reading is, in many respects, to discuss the State of the Union. Education has become a major national concern and has come under strong attack since the advent of the space age. In many respects real and reputed daficiencies in education have been equated with or blamed on daficiencies in reading. The equation and blame result from society's search for simple

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solutions to complex problems. A quote from Teaching for Thinking[1] describes such reasoning.

> If there was something wrong with society, it probably had its origins in the schools; and if the schools were at fault it was probably because of the way that schools taught reading! Hence, it followed that more and more attention must be paid to the mechanics of reading, to the testing of reading, and to the methods by which reading was taught!

The authors suggest that causation of problems is not so easily identifiable. Nevertheless, there is a national concern about reading instruction and it has reached almost a fever pitch.

Though test results show that children today are reading as well or better than comparable groups of 10, 20, or 30 years ago, there are still many people who are deficient in reading.[2] The high incidence of reading failure among school dropouts[3] indicates that there is more than a coincidental correlation between reading competence and interest in pursuing an education. Because the nation's greatest resource is an educated and informed citizenry, because reading is essential to education, and because too many citizens are unable to read adequately or at all, reading instruction is -- properly -- a national concern.

Another reason that the "State of Reading" may be equated with "State of the Union" is that vast sums of money are being spent to improve reading instruction. Through the Elementary and Secondary School Education Act alone, billions of dollars are devoted to education and of that sum, many millions are directed to programs for the improvement of reading instruction. School officials are beset with the task of spending considerable sums of money suddenly made available to them; commercial enterprises are rushing

to the marketplace with products of varying degrees of quality, all designed to meet this national need; teacher education institutions are sorely pressed to produce personnel who can give leadership to programs that will meet the needs of students; leaders in the field of reading instruction are being urged to translate research theory into classroom practice. In many respects, Arthur Heilman is quite correct when he says,

> If one sought for a capsule description of American reading instruction during the past decade, the plausible one could well be 'the frenzied search." The search was based on the false hope that there just might be a panacea for the ills which beset reading instruction. This false hope leads to many unproductive responses such as excessive concern with trivia, unwarranted loyalty -- or hostility -- to labels without concern for substance, or child-like faith in 'breakthroughs' which later prove to be more of a triumph for Madison Avenue than for children in a classroom. The frenzied search was an era in which no significant changes occured.[4]

In many respects this frenzied activity is quite understandable. Combining a national concern about reading with adequate financial resources to take appropriate action,,automatically precipitates much activity. Unfortunately activity doesn't always indicate progress. A great deal of activity can sometimes obscure the fact that nothing of substance is really occurring. School officials have a great desire, and need, for visible evidence that students' reading needs are being met and so the logical reaction is to insure visibility; personnel are hired, even though many are untrained in the teaching of reading; vast quantities of material are purchased, even though their value -- and ultimate use -- is uncertain. On more than one occasion I have had a desperate teacher come into my office, asking what he could do to set up a reading program and teach students how to read.

He had just been made responsible for a Title I program in his district even though he knew little or nothing about the teaching of readingg On other occasions I have had teachers enroll in a two-week summer workshop with their purpose being to gather ideas they could use in programs they were to establish in their home districts the following fall. Many were responsible to develop a program even though they had never had a course in reading instruction.

The desire to have visible evidence of efforts to improve reading instruction also led to the purchase of great quantities of reading-improvement hardware. A large variety of equipment is quite impressive when placed in "reading laboratories." However, it is quite apparent, when one visits schools, that comparatively little of this equipment is being used wisely, if at all. The reqsons for this lack of use, or the misuse, are twofold: 1) Personnel do not know how to use the equipment to accomplish the purposes for which it is designed; 2) The equipment purchased is not appropriate to the needs of students and therefore the former is not used and the latter is not served. With the availability of large sums of money there followed -- "as night the day" -- the availability of a great variety of materials for reading instruction. It seemed that nearly anyone who could write and had an idea to put into print was able to find a publisher to produce it for him and it eventually found its way to the shelf in the reading laboratory in some school. These materials have been used by untrained teachers as substitutes for knowledge of good instructional techniques. Though highly visible as evidence

of local activity on behalf of poor readers, many materials have added little to students' reading competence.

Such has been the situation in the very recent past. I am pleased to report that I see a movement away from the "frenzied activity." I attribute this movement to two factors. One is the money squeeze; the other is common sense. Assurances that the national budget can support guns and butter notwithstanding, there are many subtle and apparent indications that funds are not going to be as readily available as has been true in the immediate past. Thus, the period of "frenzied activity" in which panaceas were sought because we had the money to buy them is history. Even if money were available, however, there would be more substance in planning and in programs. It has become apparent to responsible school officials that merely hiring more personnel or buying more equipment or materials does not solve the problem. Personnel require training to make the best use of the equipment and materials. There must be high quality in teaching, equipment, materials; and there must be proper balance and perspective among the three.

We should not condemn or be condemned for the period of "frenzied activity." It is a natural outgrowth of the great pressures that were placed on education to find simple solutions to complex problems. It is apparent that such panaceas do not exist. Now we must seriously explore the alternatives which lie before us and lay plans to search out adequate solutions to our problems where the longed-for "breakthroughs" have not materialized.

Throughout this period of "frenzied activity," as we have discussed it, there has been a strong undercurrent of stability.

Individuals and groups have appealed for and provided common sense in the professional study of reading problems and solutions. Some of this response is a reaction to the recent pressures; some can be traced back to the very earliest days in which reading instruction was first thought of as a separate discipline. When this reasoned response is set in perspective against the frenzied activity brought on by social pressure and economic affluence, one can see a trend which will undergird the "State of Reading" for many years.

This reasoned response is based on three factors: 1) it is the teacher's skill that makes the difference rather than the materials he uses; 2) there is not one method or one set of materials that adequately serves the needs of all students; 3) research findings need to be made practical and translated into classroom practice.

None of these factors is new or particularly startling. Each is rathdr axiomatic and an obvious ppinciple. Unfortunately, axioms are not always applied nor the principles put into practice. It may be a combination of wishful thinking and my optimistic nature that leads me to say so, nevertheless I believe that we are now entering the time when the "State of Reading" will be characterized by the applied axiom and the practiced principle. The balance of this paper looks at evidence from studies that have been conducted, programs that have been attempted, and experiences that have been forced upon us related to each of these three factors. We will then draw some conclusions about the "State of Reading" and look at some directions that will shape it. Lastly we will all engage in a summarizing activity illustrative of experiences I am advocating that we provide for our students.

Teachers Make the Difference

A major study of national significance recently completed was the one related to beginning reading instruction.[5] Twenty-seven universities were involved in a cooperative study of first grade reading instruction. Each university sponsored research in which a variety of approaches to beginning reading were combined in a single study so as to determine the relative effectiveness of each. Generally speaking, comparisons of student achievement among methods or materials revealed few significant differences. Far more frequent and more significant were differences which occurred among students within methods or materials. That is, where several teachers employed the same methods and materials with comparable groups, results were often significantly different. The conclusion one can draw is that teachers make the difference. Using the same materials and, ostensibly, the same methods with comparable groups, teachers do not necessarily produce uniform results. There is a difference between perfunctory and inspired teaching. Teachers can follow the same handbook, the same manual, work under the same supervisor, use the same material, teach similar groups, and still not produce comparable results. The teacher does make a difference and th this is not a question of whether good teachers are born and not made. There is sufficient evidence in the literature to show that good teaching is a learned skill.[6] No one would argue that the innate qualities of patience, imagination, creativity, understanding, etc. need not be part of the teacher's personality and character. However, a person should learn how to use those qualities to maximum advantage. Even as our students should learn how to read by design and not by chance, so our teachers should learn to teach well

by design and not by chance.

Since studies do indicate that it is the teacher who makes the major difference in learning, it behooves all of us who are involved in teacher education to make certain that they are well prepared to discharge their responsibilities. It seems logical to place this responsibility on the institutions involved in pre-service education of teachers, but I am firmly convinced that this logic is faulty. The experience of teaching both graduate and undergraduate students, students involved in pre-service and in-service education, convinces me that education courses mean relatively little until a person is in a position to have to apply what he is learning. Contemporary pre-service education rarely provides this opportunity, though it could. I believe the quality of our education will never improve dramatically, particularly as it relates to reading instruction, until new teachers experience a required period of internship before they are considered ready to take on a class of their own. This, unfortunately will not occur for a few years, at least not until sufficient funds are available in local communities to subsidize the salaries of first-year teachers so that they can devote at least half of their time to the study of teaching while they are teaching.

Meanwhile, and eventually, concurrently, local communities can provide high quality in-service education programs which will improve the competence of their teachers. The "State of Reading" is such that imaginative programs are being developed for the in-service education of both reading teachers and teachers of content areas who are interested in teaching their students how to read and study their content materials successfully.

Two significant programs will be reported in the January 1968 issue of the Journal of Reading. Dr. Robert McCracken of Western Washington State College conducted a full-year NDEA Institute. A summer of study combined with a year of closely supervised teaching provided a type of internship for experienced teachers. As you can read in the Journal, the results were very satisfying and successful.

Another program which will be reported in the Journal is conducted by Miss Patti Denny of the Columbus, Ohio, Public School System. Using Title I funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Education Act, Miss Denny and her colleagues organized and executed a highly efficient in-service education program for both elementary and secondary school teachers of disadvantaged students. The participants focused on improving their skills intteaching reading to these students. Their prograx included the development of theoretical background as well as experience in the practical application of the theory. They had opportunity for full-day sessions both to study teaching and to develop materials appropriate to their students' needs. Again, as you can read in the Journal, the results were satisfying and give further evidence that the teacher -- well educated -- makes the difference.

An innovation in in-service education was developed through association between the Victor, New York, Central School District and Syracuse University. Elementary and secondary school teachers wanted to help their students experience more success in reading their content materials. An in-service program was organized whereby science and social studies teachers spent five full days of intensive study-on campus-early in the school year, exploring methods

and materials which would accomplish their objectives. Throughout the remainder of the year they put into practice what they had learned in these intensive sessions. Follow-up sessions between University and school personnel aided their efforts. Of particular importance was the fact that these teachers observed one another's lessons and gave professional critiques of these lessons. Teachers who had not participated in the on-campus phase of the program received direct benefit by being released from classes to observe the classroom teaching of the program participants. Substitutes were hired for this purpose. The program was well received by teachers and subjective evidence indicated sufficient growth and change among teachers and students, as the result of the program, to justify its continuation. Various objective measures are being employed this year to determine the extent of teacher change and its effect on student achievement in reading.

The particularly significant point in this program is the changed pattern of in-service education: that professional improvement activity was accepted as the responsibility of the local district as well as of the individual teacher himself and it was offered as part of the regular school day. Sharing the responsibility for professional improvement and ceasing to blame pre-service education for inadequate teaching, has boosted morale and produced professional improvement.

Whereas the Victor project, so-called, was supported by Title I funds under ESEA, the same program is being applied in a large school district that has sufficient resources of its own to fund such a program. In this district, Spring Valley, New York, a total of 36 elementary and secondary school teachers are participating in seven

full-day seminars to study reading instruction in science and social studies. The opportunity to devote a full day to study and discussion of teaching methods and materials against the background of good experience and current involvement in teaching provides an exciting in-service program. This is a considerable improvement over more traditional in-service courses conducted during what one teacher referred to as "tired time," at the end of a long school day. It indicates a major step forward in the "State of Reading" toward the time when all communities will accept professional improvement of its teachers as one of its basic obligations and that improvement programs will be part of the regular school day, not attached to the end of the day for a given number of times each semester with the promise of a few hours of local in-service credit as the bait. In-service education conducted during the regular day, unencumbered with the complications of in-service credit and salary scales, places professional improvement on a plane where it has quality and produces the change in instruction that is desired.

Another development in teacher education is the availability of more and more consultant services from publishers. Companies offer aid not solely for the purpose of selling their materials but more particularly to improve the quality of instruction in the schools. Understandably, materials sold by the companies which sponsor this consultant service are available, but their presence is not emphasized. There seems to be an increasing interest on the part of publishers to provide services to schools. As a result, many highly qualified consultants are now available to schools through these companies and they render a valuable service.

A new in-service program which is having an increasingly significant effect on the "State of Reading" is the film series entitled "Reading Instruction in Secondary Schools." This series of ten motion picture films was produced under a grant by the U.S. Office of Education under the Project English Program. The film series was sponsored by and produced at Syracuse University. It is directed to teachers of various subjects in secondary education. The films are accompanied by a set of manuals which set a purpose for viewing the films, provide a guide for interpreting the films, suggest follow-up activities for applying the teaching principles presented in the films, include samples of materials used in the films, and provide a basis for review of the films. The combination of films and manuals constitute a packaged in-service course, if you will, which can be offered by the local school district and conducted by local personnel. Many schools have little or no access to university consultants who can conduct courses for them. Some state agencies desire to sponsor an intensive in-service program for a large number of districts but find it difficult to do so because not enoughtqualified consultants are available to conduct saturation campaggns. This packaged in-service course meets both needs.

The state of North Carolina is using the films in a saturation campaign. Under the direction of Dr. Valsame, State Director of In-Service Education, 70 teachers and supervisors are meeting to study the films and manuals, preparing to go throughout the State and conduct in-service programs based on the series. These 70 supervisors will work with a total of 2000 teachers as they study methods and materials for improving reading instruction in content areas in secondary schools. Surely such a program will have a profound effect on the "State of Reading" in the State of North Carolina.

Through the Higher Education Act of 1965, the USOE is providing for an excellent type of in-service education program. Colleges and universities are the sponsoring agencies for Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs, with each institution focusing on a specific discipline: science, social science, reading, etc. Teachers with at least three years of teaching experience are eligible to apply to the sponsoring institutions for fellowships in the particular programs they offer. Each institution establishes its own criteria for accepting Fellows into its program.

Fellows who are accepted receive a stipend of $4000 for an academic year of study, plus $600 per dependent, plus tuition. Fellows agree to return to the districts from which they come, to perform the role for which they will study. Obviously, then, the purpose of this program is to upgrade instruction in local schools throughout the country.

During the current school year, 70 colleges and universities are sponsoring Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs. Seven of these institutions are sponsoring Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs in Reading: University of Arizona; University of Georgia; University of Iowa; Michigan State University; University of Mississippi; University of New Hampshire; Syracuse University. On January 15, 1968 the USOE will announce the institutions that are sponsoring Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs throughout the country. Probably the total number of programs will be the same. Though there is no way of knowing how many will be devoted to Reading, most likely it will be at least the same number as this year, if not more.

School officials should keep alert to the announcement of these programs and encourage promising faculty members to apply for Fellow-

ships. This is a rich and rewarding experience. When the Fellows return to their districts they are prepared to make a substantial contribution to the total instructional program.

Teachers do make a difference in instruction, more than any other factor that one can name. This being true, in-service education programs are crucially important to the improvement of reading instruction. These programs,,to produce maximum results, should be part of the professional responsibility of the teacher, experienced in intensive units of time during the school day. New teachers should enter an internship program so they can learn how to apply the theory they have studied in pre-service courses, applied under supervision so they have help in translating the theory into practice. More and more high quality in-service programs of a "packaged" nature will become available to school districts. Local leadership will do well to keep abreast of these developments and make use of them in their local in-service programs. A combination of these possibilities will have a profound effect on the "State of Reading" and I now see us moving in this direction.

Ecclecticism is the Rule

Another significant finding in the first grade study was that there is not one method nor one set of materials that meets the needs of all students. Regardless of the methods and materials used some students showed significant improvement and some did not! This supports what researchers have been saying for years, that there is no one best way to teach reading. But even though this is what we have long known and even though it is corroborated by this recent research, teachers -- and school officials -- still tend to champion

the method or the set of materials. Though it is yet in the future, the time is coming -- and we are now in the developing stages -- where teachers will have a repertoire of methods to apply to a variety of materials so that students who do not respond to one set will be approached with another and another and another until one is found that meets the need. Such flexibility will come through in-service courses, that we have already discussed, as well as through changes in preservice education. But until that time comes, the teacher with one method and one set of materials will have limited success, helping only those students who respond to the set which is provided, experiencing frustration with those who do not respond because he has nothing else to offer.

Reading programs which employ the basal reading system produce significant results for many students but not for all. What does the teacher do who knows only how to follow a manual which accompanies thebasal reader?

Teachers who make use of materials written in ITA find that many students respond beautifully and learn how to read very well. But there are those who do not learn how to handle this orthography and thus, do not learn how to read. What does the teacher do when this is all he knows? More importantly, what do his students do?

Many students respond with enthusiasm to the linguistic approach to reading, attacking words without hesitation, finding satisfaction in sounding out letter combinations whether they be bona fide words or nonsense syllables. Many ppogress into stages of high level comprehension but not all do. What recourse do teachers have who know only this system?

The language experience approach to beginning reading has produced many thoughtful and happy readers. But when a student does not respond, where does the teacher turn when this is all he knows?

One could go on and on. For example, does the high school reading teacher in your district have sufficient repertoire of skills to assist poor readers in the twelfth grade by transliterating material into ITA and helping them experience success with an orthography that does not symbolize their defeat? Some teachers have done this with good results. Or can your junior high school reading teacher make goodduse of the languag6eexperience approach, or the linguistic, or the individualized, or whatever you might name in order to meet the needs of students in his classes?

Teachers must have instructional alternatives and materials to support each. As they observe students responding to their teaching, teachers will apply these alternatives in order to find the combination that meets the needs of each individual in the classroom. Such teaching does not now characterize the "State of Reading" but it should. As in-service education of higher quality is provided for teachers and as internship programs are provided for new teachers, such ecclecticism will be the rule, not the exception.

Translating Research into Practice

That there is a time lag between research findings and classroom application is generally conceded. Some[7] estimate this time lag to be 50 years. Hopefully the interval is being narrowed, but it still is too wide. It is quite clear that we are not now teaching as well as we know how to teach. Both in professional texts and in-service courses there is a great deal of intellectualizing about

teaching, much reporting of research findings, but comparatively little translation of that research into everyday instruction, little application of the principles and practices to which we give intellectual assent.

There is no clearer evidence of disparity between knowledge and practice than in the teaching of reading in content areas. The frequently uttered cliché "Every teacher is a teacher of reading" reflects awareness of the responsibility each content teacher has to help his students be successful readers of basic and supplementary materials in his subject. The professional literature is filled with admonitions to content teachersxto meet their responsibilities in this regard; but relatively few practical suggestions are given as to <u>how</u> teachers should go about doing this task. Research studies[8] have shown that students can be taught how to be successful readers of their content materials and still learn the content, without jeopardizing the curriculum or taking an undue amount of time "away from teaching the content." Unfortunately, however, comparatively little is being done to apply these findings in situations less ideal than the experimental conditions. Pre-service and in-service education programs for content teachers could emphasize methods and materials which make possible the simultaneous teaching of content and the skills which make possible the independent acquisition of content.

We know that students learn more when there is recognizable structure in lessons and assignments, structure which helps students learn to set and accomplish specific purposes, structure that aids them in the discovery, recall, and use of important ideas.[9] Overwhelming practice in classrooms across the country shows little

awareness of this knowledge: vague assignments and barely recognizable structure suggest that teachers assume students already have the skills by which to operate independently in the pursuit of ideas in the curriculum. One wonders why these students need to take the courses if they are able to operate on the level of independence the teachers assume -- by their assignments -- that they can handle.

Research evidence[10] indicates that more learning takes place when students are active participants in learning -- within a structure provided by the teacher -- than when they are more passive, as they are during lectures. Yet it is almost a rule of thumb that about 80 per cent of classroom time is consumed by teacher-talk with little opportunity for student-talk. When students do talk, they speak to the teacher and rarely to one another -- except covertly and with the risk of reprimand. When teachers provide structure within which students can react to one another's ideas, learning is at least as great and often times much greater than when students merely listen to lectures, take and subsequently memorize notes to give back at examination time. Through such teaching which allows student interaction under guidance, students seem to learn the content more thoroughly and -- so importantly -- learn more how to learn the content.

Unfortunately, the "State of Reading" in content areas is such that we are only intellectualizing about good practices, not applying them in the classroom. I see scattered evidences of teachers and administrators moving in the direction of applying what we now know. Many of the in-service education programs mentioned above are directed toward this instructional problem: teaching students how to be successful in reading content materials; but we have a long way to

go. School officials can be of specific help to teachers and thus encourage application of what we know:

1. Stop pressuring teachers to "cover the curriculum" and to maintain a good "record" on local or state examinations for the curriculum. The former encourages lecturing to dispense the information to students regardless of whether or not they learn it; the latter encourages teaching for factual recall and, consequently, the lecture method. No room is left for emphasis on skills needed to learn the content independently. No time is provided for students to learn from one another as they mutually explore topics related to the curriculum. Officials in many schools I have visited believe they are not exerting such pressures on teachers, and yet their teachers react as though such pressure is on them. Officials --leaders in the schools -- will have to assure teachers that they are <u>not</u> exerting such pressures. When teachers are thus assured and begin to apply the knowledge we now have concerning teaching students how to learn, as well as what to learn, then the "State of Reading" will enter a new era of productivity and unparalleled success.
2. School officials can aid teachers by assuring them that student interaction within classes is a good thing and that having "noise" becauseeof discussions among students is not construed as "lack of discipline or control" in the classroom. Many content teachers are reluctant to allow their students to work in groups for fear their principal will misinterpret the activity. Learning is not necessarily correlated with the decibel level in the classroom. As already indicated, purposeful student interaction within a structure

provided the teacher is extremely profitable -- both in terms of learning the content and in learning <u>how to learn</u> the content.

3. School officials can aid teachers by encouraging them to keep this question constantly before themselves as they prepare their lessons and as they teach: "Am I assuming that the students already know what I am attempting to teach them?" If teachers respond honestly to this question, the results will be startling. For instance, they will never merely assign a reading selection in the text by identifying the pages to read with no other direction or preparation... because this assumes that students know the technical vocabulary in that unit, that they know skills to apply as they read that unit, that they have such a grasp of basic concepts related to the unit that they can set their own purpose for the development of additional concepts and are able to select only that information which is useful in the development and application of the concepts. This is assumptive teaching and it can be avoided if teachers make it their purpose to show students <u>how to do</u> what they are required to do rather than assuming they already know how. When teachers insure rather than assume, the "State of Reading" will make great advances.

<u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Now I would like to practice what I'm preaching here. Rather than summarizing my presentation and drawing conclusions for you, I want you to do so for yourself within a structure that I will provide. This will illustrate what I think the "State of Reading"

should be, active participation of each student within a structure that actually shows him how to do what is required of him. We will be working on the skills of drawing conclusions from a presentation made by another person and resolving these conclusions with our own point of view. You will see that by interaction with other members of the audience you are profitably practicing these skills while, at the same time, developing a deeper understanding of the concepts I presented. When you have completed the exercise, we will use it as the basis for full-audience discussion about the "State of Reading."

Drawing Conclusions

Listed below are possible conclusions one can draw from the speaker's presentation. Read each statement. If you think the speaker would support a statement, place a check on the first line before its number. If you agree with -- and support -- the conclusion, place a check on the second line before the number.

Complete the exercise by yourself first. Then compare your answers with memberssof your group and, where you have differences, try to resolve them.

___ ___ 1. Not much is known about how to teach reading.

___ ___ 2. Reading instruction is relatively unsophisticated as evidenced by the numerous "methods" advocated by different groups.

___ ___ 3. If we applied the knowledge we now have concerning reading instruction, the "State of Reading" would be much improved.

___ ___ 4. Since teachers tend to teach the way there were taught rather than the way they were taught to teach, there is greater hope for improving the "State of Reading" through in-service education programs than through pre-service.

___ ___ 5. Federal funds available to improve reading instruction have hampered rather than helped progress in this vital area.

___ ___ 6. The "State of Reading" should be characterized by principal emphasis on teaching reading through content areas and by relatively little separate reading instruction in "reading classes."

___ ___ 7. Good teachers "are born, not made."

___ ___ 8. The burden of learning how to read should be shifted to students rather than being carried by teachers for students.

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